

Green New Deals in Action: Nine cities commit to simultaneously tackle inequality, social justice and climate change

Accra, Barcelona, Cape Town, Durban, Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg, Tshwane, Los Angeles and Warsaw finding new approaches to deliver local climate action by addressing the needs of their most impacted and excluded populations and engaging them in decision making.

London, UK (XX July 2021) - Today, C40 Cities announced they are supporting nine mayors from cities around the world to deliver action to simultaneously address the connected issues of climate change, inequality, social justice and access to decent jobs. These innovative approaches and policies, which will be tailored for the specific context of each city, will help deliver local inclusive climate action.

The nine cities will focus on curbing emissions, creating decent jobs, and building resilience in sectors that are the greatest contributors to the climate crisis. Crucially, these projects will prioritise efforts to engage and support the most impacted and excluded groups and bring equity and inclusion at the core of cities' climate action.

- Accra will develop a new approach and new programmes to involve workers in the informal sector in climate action, initially in the waste sector
- Barcelona will strengthen equity led climate programmes that will increase climate resilience of vulnerable populations and reduce energy poverty
- Cape Town, Durban, Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg and Tshwane will work collectively to strengthen skills, knowledge and capacity on a just transition at city and national level
- Los Angeles will work collaboratively with civil society, unions and key stakeholders on a just transition for the city and the creation of green jobs
- Warsaw will develop a dedicated programme to address air quality through replacement of coal stoves, that will include protection of low-income groups, in order to tackle energy poverty and build a local urban coalition with key stakeholders to further city climate action.

The cities will work closely with a wider cohort of C40 "peer cities" with the goal of expanding action to over twenty cities in five global regions through a new Inclusive Climate Action Forum for cities. The Forum will connect cities that want to drive policy changes and support inclusive, local green new deals, a just transition and a green and just recovery from COVID-19. The Forum will allow cities to learn from each other, and to promote their experiences and actions on inclusion and equity. Together, cities will communicate and share their best practices and advocate for removing barriers that hold back pioneering solutions.

The Initiative is supported by C40 Cities and the Open Society Foundations. Strategic partners of the initiative include the Just Transition Centre of the International Trade Union Confederation and the Urban Movement Incubator.

“When it comes to climate change solutions, nobody is doing more than cities, but nobody is doing enough, especially for the frontline communities bearing the brunt of more pollution, dirtier air, and higher emissions,” said C40 Chair and Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti. “We cannot tackle the full depth and breadth of the climate crisis without confronting the interrelated challenges of inequality and injustice. That’s why Los Angeles is standing with mayors around the world to demonstrate how a growing coalition of cities can advance the vision of our Global Green New Deal and push for policies that preserve public health, protect livelihoods, safeguard our planet, and weave equity into every decision.”

Mayor of Los Angeles & C40 Chair, Eric Garcetti

“Accra has recognized the benefit of integrating informal waste collectors in its operations. These actors manage 30% of the total waste generated in the city. Through the GGND Pilot implementation, we are looking at further improving the relationship between the city authorities and other informal actors in order to strengthen informal actor voice and promote ownership of climate action”

Mayor of Accra, Mohammed Adjei Sowah

“Climate emergency makes us admit that we are vulnerable and radically eco-dependent. It has a multiplicative effect on social inequalities and now, more than ever, we need to take care of the most vulnerable people. To deal with the climate emergency, the biodiversity crisis and the pandemic, we must transform the economic model, which is unsustainable and unfair, and we must uphold the values of shared care. We must ensure that the measures we take do not require even more sacrifices of the most vulnerable sectors; instead, the efforts should fall on the most privileged ones.”

Mayor of Barcelona, Ada Colau

“One of the pathways towards achieving climate resilience, as outlined in our upcoming Climate Change Action Plan, is based on greater equity, inclusivity and a just transition to a climate resilient future that is centred around strong participation and engagement by all stakeholders to eliminate resource poverty, ensure sustainable and equitable land use, enable poverty reduction, and encourage and ensure wellbeing and a healthy environment. Cape Town’s newly launched climate action campaign Let’s ACT. For a stronger Cape Town, has at its core the concept of becoming stronger through inclusive and just actions and we look forward to engaging with partners and stakeholders to achieve this.”

Mayor of Cape Town, Dan Plato

“Durban having been the first African city to develop its own Climate Action Plan, confirms that the city recognises the importance of building social cohesion. Building on this premise, the city supports the health, social and economic needs of our communities. Hence the “Sisonke” chapter in the CAP is strongly focused on the themes of inclusivity and equity. The city will ensure that as the world recovers from the pandemic, there is a just transition that creates decent jobs, reduces inequality, and drives inclusion and improvements in the lives of working class and the broader masses of our communities.”

Mayor of Durban, Mxolisi Kaunda

“The City of Ekurhuleni as a member of C40 Cities Network is proud to announce our participation in the Global Green New Deal, together with other cities internationally to address the issue of inequality, social justice and climate change through Just Transition. The city is aware of its existing vulnerabilities, challenges and opportunities; participating in the Global Green New Deal is an opportunity to enhance the strategic direction related towards transitioning and resilience to climate change and COVID 19.

The City of Ekurhuleni together with other South African cities have committed to work collectively to drive policy changes and support inclusive, local green new deals while strengthening skills, knowledge and capacity on just transition for action within the cities. “

Mayor of Ekurhuleni, Mzwandile Masina

“City of Tshwane is committed to enhance the local green recovery solutions through our Climate Action Plan (CAP), which emphasises sustainable local efforts to reduce inequality, increase social justice and stimulate economic recovery. We have identified local adaptive and climate measures which prioritise the most marginalised and vulnerable communities, by initiating collaborative partnerships with local Non-profit Organisations for local climate responses. The GGND initiative is regarded as an exceptional platform to upgrade knowledge and skill base, to manage accelerated inclusive and just transition in order to reduce poverty and employment”.

Mayor of Tshwane, Randall Williams

“Low-income population will likely suffer the most from adverse effects of climate change. That is why in Warsaw we intend to put their needs in the centre of our ambitious climate policy. We have been preparing a dedicated programme of fuel exchange, from high-emission solid-fuel stoves and boilers, to renewable energy. We will also support this group of Warsaw citizens with financial support, so to make sure they do not stay behind Warsaw’s green transition”

Rafał Trzaskowski, Mayor of Warsaw

“Action to address climate change must generate resilience and opportunity for the many, not the few. Mayors, alongside union partners, are natural champions for the Global Green New Deal. We expect this work to collectively build momentum to advance climate justice. The willing leadership of these mayors exemplifies the accountable, inclusive governance we need to meet the urgent demands of our rapidly changing world.”

Mark Malloch Brown, President of the Open Society Foundations

“Cities are ground zero for climate action, COVID response, and creating the good quality, high road jobs we need to fight inequality. The global union movement is ready to work with C40 cities and city governments everywhere to make sure that climate action and just transition drive full employment through investment in jobs, skills and quality apprenticeships. Every city climate plan should be a jobs plan, with labor standards, essential public services, and equity at its heart. Working together with C40’s pilot cities, we will show how just transition can create good jobs, lifelong learning, and quality apprenticeships. We commend C40’s pilot cities for their leadership.”

Sharan Burrow, Secretary General, ITUC

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Notes:

About the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group

C40 is a network of nearly 100 mayors of the world’s leading cities who are working to deliver the urgent action needed right now to confront the climate crisis and create a future where everyone, everywhere can thrive. Mayors of C40 cities are committed to using a **science-based and people-focused approach** to help the world limit global heating to 1.5°C and build healthy, equitable and resilient communities. Through a Global Green New Deal, mayors are working alongside a broad coalition of representatives from labor, business, the youth climate movement and civil society to go further and faster than ever before. The current Chair of C40 is Mayor of Los Angeles Eric Garcetti; and three-term Mayor of New York City Michael R. Bloomberg serves as President of the Board. C40’s work is made possible by our three strategic funders: Bloomberg Philanthropies, Children’s Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF), and Realdania.

To learn more about the work of C40 and our cities, please visit [our website](#) and [C40 Knowledge Hub](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).